IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-20 (Cancelled)

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A method for determining the position of each fiber unit in ~~the slice according to claim 16~~ each slice that comprises a fiber alignment, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) cutting sequentially a fiber alignment obtained by binding and immobilizing fibers, to obtain a series of fiber alignment slices S(1), S(2), ... S(h), ... S(m);

(b) selecting any given slice S(h) from m number of slices, and determining two-dimensional coordinates for each fiber unit contained in said slice S(h), based on the coordinate reference ~~pointss~~ points in said slice S(h);

(c) determining the two-dimensional coordinates of each fiber unit contained in slice S(i) located ~~close~~ adjacent to said slice S(h), based on the coordinate data of slice S(h) obtained in step (b) and the coordinate reference points in said slice S(i); and

(d) repeating steps (b) and (c) to determine the two-dimensional coordinates of each fiber unit in ~~said~~ one or more successive and adjacent fiber alignment ~~slice~~ slices, S(j), S(k), ...S(m), that comprise a fiber alignment, and wherein each slice comprises fiber units and reference points.

Claims 22-59 (Cancelled).

Claim 60 (New): The method of claim 21, wherein, in step (b), the two-dimensional coordinates of each fiber unit in slice S(h) are first determined relative to an XY plane, and the resulting values are then translated into a coordinate system based on the coordinate reference points in said slice S(h), to form translated coordinates for each fiber in slice S(h).

Claim 61 (New): The method of claim 60, wherein, in step (c), the two-dimensional coordinates of each fiber unit in slice S(i) are first determined relative to an XY plane, using the corresponding translated coordinates for each fiber in slice S(h), and the resulting values are then translated into a coordinate system based on the coordinate reference points in said slice S(i).

Claim 62 (New): The method of claim 21, wherein said fibers are selected from the group consisting of hollow fibers incorporating an immobilized biological substance, porous fibers incorporating an immobilized biological substance, and porous hollow fibers incorporating an immobilized biological substance, wherein the biological substance is directly immobilized on the fiber, in the fiber, or both on and in the fiber.

Claim 63 (New): The method of claim 21, wherein said fibers are fibers retaining a gel which incorporates an immobilized biological substance, whereby the biological substance is immobilized on the fiber, in the fiber, or both on and in the fiber.

Claim 64 (New): The method of claim 63, wherein said fibers are selected from the group consisting of solid fibers, hollow fibers, porous fibers and hollow porous fibers.

Claim 65 (New): The method of claim 64, wherein said fibers are solid fibers, and wherein the gel incorporating an immobilized biological substance is retained on a surface of the fibers.

Claim 66 (New): The method of claim 64, wherein said fibers are hollow fibers, and wherein the gel incorporating an immobilized biological substance is retained in a hollow part of the fibers.

Claim 67 (New): The method of claim 64, wherein said fibers are porous fibers, and wherein the gel incorporating an immobilized biological substance is retained in the pore(s) of the fibers.

Claim 68 (New): The method of claim 64, wherein said fibers are porous hollow fibers, and wherein the gel incorporating an immobilized biological substance is retained in a hollow part and the pore(s) of the fibers.

Claim 69 (New): The method of claim 62, wherein the biological substance is any one selected from a group consisting of the following substances (a) to (c):

(a) nucleic acid, amino acid, sugar or lipid;

(b) a polymer consisting of one or more kinds of ingredients from the substances stated in (a) above; and

(c) a substance interacting with substances stated in (a) or (b) above.

Claim 70 (New): The method of claim 69, wherein the biological substance is nucleic acid.

Claim 71 (New): The method of claim 63, wherein the biological substance is any one selected from a group consisting of the following substances (a) to (c):

(a) nucleic acid, amino acid, sugar or lipid;

(b) a polymer consisting of one or more kinds of ingredients from the substances stated in (a) above; and

(c) a substance interacting with substances stated in (a) or (b) above.

Claim 72 (New): The method of claim 71, wherein the biological substance is nucleic acid.

Claim 73 (New): The method of claim 63, wherein said fibers also have a pigment retained on the fiber, in the fiber or both on and in the fiber, by means of the gel.